584 [791] is not particularly well known to them. The boy's parents will be informed by the girl's family that their decision must await the outcome of consultation with an astrologer concerning the compatability of the birth dates of the prospective bride and groom. If the marriage is found to be an auspicious one -- which it usually will be found to be if the girl's parents desire the match -- an affirmative answer is relayed to the boy's parents. The latter thereupon call on her parents, and in the presence of elders, formally ask for the girl's hand. From this moment the couple are considered betrothed and must not go about in public unchaperoned.

585 The wedding date is astrologically determined. The length of the engagement depends upon the availability of an auspicious wedding date. In general, lengthy engagements are disliked. In no case should an engagement carry over the period of Waso, the so-called Buddhist 'Lent.'

Before the wedding ceremony, the bride's house is open to friends and relatives, who are expected to drop in to help prepare the house for the wedding, lending household items that may be needed for the occasion. A pavilion adjoining the house is erected to accomodate the crowd that will attend. All the helpers and would-be helpers in this work are offered meals and light refreshments.

The bride's family normally bears all the expenses of these preparations, but sometimes the boy's family will mention a sum of money either as a contribution towards the wedding or as an indication of their son's ability to support a wife. If such funds are offered, they will be mentioned at the time the girl's hand is sought.

One room in the girl's house is set aside as the bridal chamber. In families of average or better means it is furnished with a bed, draperies, and complete toilet and dressing facilities. In poorer families that cannot afford to furnish the bridal chamber in elaborate fashion, some show of style will be made in furnishing the bed, at least. By the evening before the wedding day the room must be ready, with all the wedding gifts on display.

On the wedding day three or four intimate married friends of the girl dress her. This must not be done by widows or divorcees, for it would bode ill for the marriage. For unmarried girls to perform this task would be immodest. Neither should a pregnant woman take part in dressing the bride, for that would be bad for her baby. The dressing of the bride must begin sufficiently early so that she will be completely ready at a precise, astrologically determined wedding hour.

The bridegroom's party arrives just prior to the appointed time for the ceremony. It includes two of his bachelor friends as well as his family. He takes his seat on a cushion on the platform that has been specially erected. The bride is brought out by her matrons and approaches with eyes downcast. She takes her seat on a cushion to the bridegroom's left. Across the platform, from left to right, are placed three silver offering bowls. A fourth bowl, on the right hand edge of the platform, contains puffed rice. The bridegroom's bachelor friends take seats to his rear; the matrons of the bride sit directly behind her.

● 794 585 A lay elder, arranged for by the bride's mother, officiates. He recites a poem of praise concerning the merits of the bride and groom and the goodness

of their families. The bride and groom are each handed a spray of flowers from the offering bowls and they make obeisance to the guardian spirits of their respective households. With a second spray they make obeisance to their parents and elders. Then a small tray containing fruit and rice is placed before them. The lay elder places a spoonful of this food first to the bridegroom's, then to the bride's lips. As he does this he makes a statement to the effect that this is the auspicious meal and that he hopes blessings may flow from it. 794 585

At this point, a happy and fruitfully married couple from among the oldest people in the community step forward to marry the couple. The left hand of the man is placed on top of the right hand of the girl. Water is poured on their hands thus joined and a silk scarf tied over them as the elderly couple recite words to the effect that they are now united. A chanter arises and intones a song of praise for long life. The contents of the bowl of puffed rice and money are scattered among the audience, and everyone scrambles for them. Now the bride and groom rise and are led to the bridal chamber, across the doorway of which is stretched a golden chain. After the bride has entered, anyone who wishes to do so tries to barricade the doorway and demand money of the groom. He is obliged to pay everyone who makes such demands. This money is known as 'stone money,' from the old custom, still practiced sometimes, of stoning the house of a couple on their wedding night until the bridegroom arises and pays them to desist. This behavior, the taunts and demands that are expressed, has an implied bawdiness about it. Once the couple have entered the bridal chamber, others may go in to inspect it. When all have left the chamber there is a general feast. Usually the feast in Tadagale partakes of the nature of a tea party, since a full scale feast is expensive. Each guest receives a symbolic gift, usually a cigar or a fan.

Old Age. Old age is the period after one's children are grown, the 'third age' of life. Women are definitely regarded as old after the menopause. The Burmese terms for 'old lady' and 'old man' are synonymous with grandparent terms, both in address and reference. Sometimes 'old mother' is used instead of 'old lady.' Long life is considered a great blessing and an indication of merit earned. Long life is prayed for and old age greatly idealized. 886 601 761

The ideal aged person is one who has successfully reared a family, has grandchildren, and a certain amount of material wealth. The aged are expected to be retiring and unobtrusive in their behavior. They should not go out visiting very much; they should eat less and avoid appearing too well dressed or jeweled when attending religious observances. 888

An attitude of resignation characterizes the outlook of the aged person. It is unheard of that old people should work. A possible exception would be a village headman, who, it is felt, should be a person of long experience. When aged people live with their children they assume the role of teachers of their grandchildren. Most of the time of elderly people is spent in activities centering around the pagodas and monasteries, organizing of religious festivals, and raising funds for the monks and charities. They often take leading roles in such activities. 887

The elderly members of a household arise early to see that the rice is cooked for the daily offering to the monks, and to insure that the household altar is properly looked after. It is preferable for them to arise before dawn, for to do so is considered very meritorious.

25; Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

39. PAINTING OF SHINLAUNG PETE

The constituted daily routine of the monastery takes no account of recreation. In practice there is a wide margin of leisure. But the wearer of the yellow robe is not seen at play. Arithmetical puzzles are the nearest approach to a game. On the other hand, the cheerfulness of the race suffers no restraint. There is decorum, without austerity or sanctimony. The severest penance laid upon the novice is temporary relegation to the secular state (*lein-byan*) for such faults as lying, theft, or killing anything. Cruelty to an animal is punished with caning.

The *yahán* exercise no exclusive function beyond that of admitting candidates to the novitiate and the full membership of their Assembly. The affairs of the Buddhist Church are initiated and conducted by the laity. The recluses merely add, by their presence, to the religious distinction of an occasion. At the shrine the recluse is like any other pilgrim; he never is a ministrant or priest. Neither is there any altar. The only material objects to which sanctity pertains are the relics of the Buddha. The members of the Assembly know no distinctions of men, racial or social. As regards the temporal power, of whatever origin, the recluse should be absolutely passive, neither contravening the laws nor invoking them when he suffers wrong. The recluse neither denounces nor harbours the criminal, a neutral attitude of which criminals are not slow to take advantage.

When admitted to full membership of the Assembly instituted by the Buddha (*Thingá*, Pāli *Sangha*), the novice becomes *Yahán* (*Yahándaw*, *Rahán*, *Arahan*), which signifies *perfected*, one advanced a stage

40. BOYIN RECEIVING HIGHER INSTRUCTION

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

346 796 778 *kambawd*. The laity assembled outside the precincts let off rockets and guns in celebration of the event. Finally, the ceremony of *yeiticha*, the pouring of water (No. 100), is performed by the grantor of the site—as at every other

[213]

46. ILLUMINATED KAMBAWA.

religious dedication—to signify that the property has been dedicated for ever. The precincts of the *thein* are marked by low boundary pillars, mostly of Sagáing marble, set in the trench, which is then filled in. A different form of *thein* is the *ye-thein*, which is built over the water to effect its isolation.

792 735 Although the *yahán*, as already stated, may not ask for anything, he may decline what is offered. He signifies this by inverting his *thabít* (*thabeit-hmauk*). The action has become a symbol for excommunication. The *yahán* might assemble in the *thein* and perform *thabít-hmauk* against a layman for heinous wickedness. His house would be passed by in collecting *sun* and all offerings tendered by him refused. The practice has become obsolete; it is said to have no warrant in the scriptures, and to be contrary to their spirit.

[794] [178]

47. SUN SENT BY THE KYAUNGTABA.

Where the people are very prosperous and the *yahán* are not many, the collecting of *sun* in the streets has sunk to a formality observed by the novices only, who on return to the monastery empty their *thabít* to the dogs. But in other circumstances the sojourner *yahán*, novices and scholars live on the *sun*. An ordinance of the Buddha dispenses the *yahán* from collecting his food from house to house if there be pious people who proffer him his sustenance at his abode. The founder of the monastery (*Kyaung-tagá*), who nomin-